

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 12/2/04
Department Name: Sheriff
Department No.: 032
Agenda Date: 12/14/04
Placement:
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Continued Item:
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jim Anderson
Sheriff

STAFF CONTACT: Lieutenant Laz Salinas
x4144

SUBJECT: Request to Add Three (3) Communications Dispatcher positions

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt a Personnel Resolution effective January 3, 2005 to add three (3.0 FTE) Communications Dispatcher I/II (Class 1803-1804; Range 5264-5464 \$3,350-\$4,519 per month) to be assigned to the County of Santa Barbara Public Safety Communications Center.
2. Approve a Budget Revision to transfer of funds in the amount of \$64,660 from General Fund Contingency to Salaries to appropriate costs of these positions for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2004-2005.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendations are primarily aligned with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Currently, our personnel in the Communications Center answer 9-1-1 telephone calls in the unincorporated areas of the County, the cities of Carpinteria, Goleta, Buellton, Solvang and Guadalupe. Personnel dispatch law enforcement resources in the unincorporated portion of the County and to the cities of Carpinteria, Goleta, Buellton, Solvang and Guadalupe. Fire dispatch includes

the County unincorporated areas and under contract, the city of Guadalupe, the Carpinteria - Summerland Fire District, the Orcutt Fire District and the Solvang Fire District. They also dispatch American Medical Response (AMR) ambulances County-wide for both emergency and non-emergency calls for service. After hours, the Center dispatches for California Fish and Game, and pages personnel from other smaller County and State agencies who do not support 24 hours a day 7 days a week dispatching.

At a series of meetings the need for our dispatchers to begin an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) program was discussed. In order to provide EMD we expressed the need for an additional 5 dispatchers to handle the EMD protocol, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In April 2001, a budget expansion request was completed to add two (2) Communications Dispatchers I/II to the Sheriff's Department dispatch staff in order to begin the transition of adequate staff to implement an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) program twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. As was discussed in the meetings in 2001, we addressed the need for an additional three (3) Communications Dispatcher I/II positions in the future as EMD became a reality. That proposal had the support of the representatives of the County Administrators Office, Fire Department, Public Health Department as well as the Sheriff's Department.

Emergency medical dispatching is a proven lifesaving protocol. When a person calls the Communications Center to request an ambulance for an emergency, the dispatcher answering the 9-1-1 phone begins a dialog with the caller asking specific questions to evaluate the emergency, dispatch the ambulance and then provide specific medical instructions that allow the calling party to administer life-saving aid pending the arrival of the first medically trained responder.

Emergency Medical Dispatching is now a reality in the County of Santa Barbara's Public Safety Dispatch Center and the three additional positions need to be added to provide EMD to the citizens we serve 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, without the continued usage of overtime and extra help to guarantee the service. Through an agreement with the Public Health Department, personnel in our center will provide EMD instructions for the critical sequence calls (cardiac arrest, choking and childbirth) to callers from cities not currently providing EMD instructions. This is an additional service not currently being provided.

In April of 2004, the Public Safety Communications Center initiated full EMD 24 hours a day, 365 days a year which increased workload without increasing the current staffing levels. In addition, the Public Safety Communications Center anticipates a call volume increase due to the transfer of cellular 911 phone calls that will be answered by the Communications Center for the phase II wireless conversion. Originally, these calls were the responsibility of the California Highway Patrol who interrogated callers before passing on law enforcement

related calls to the center. The center will now be responsible for the initial interrogation of cellular 911 calls, adding additional call volume. The proposed ambulance contract between Emergency Medical Services and AMR will add to the call volume (Cities of Santa Maria and Lompoc sequence EMD calls) and increased training requirements will be expected of dispatchers. Performance measures (RPM) that the center will operate under are currently under development between Public Health and the Sheriff's Department. The performance measures will increase the hours of training required for dispatchers to stay current with EMD. To date, the Public Safety Dispatch Center has been able to sustain the increased workload of full EMD by utilizing overtime. The addition of these positions will significantly reduce the utilization of overtime.

Mandates and Service Levels:

In order to meet the demand of performing Emergency Medical Dispatching all the time, the Sheriff's Department needs to add three additional Dispatchers I/II immediately. The increase in personnel would ensure the Sheriff's Department Communications Center would meet EMD performance measures and make a positive difference for the communities we serve and protect.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The current Fiscal Year (FY) 2004-2005 impact of these positions is \$107,058. This fiscal impact assumes the mid year hiring of three (3) Communications Dispatcher positions at the average salary of a current Communications Dispatcher including salary and benefits. The proposed ambulance contract anticipates providing the cost of one (1) of the three (3) Communications Dispatcher positions ongoing. The Sheriff's Department anticipates receiving \$42,398 in revenue from this contract in FY 2004-2005 which will cover the remaining cost. Therefore the General Fund Contingency impact in FY 2004-2005 of this recommendation is \$64,660. The annual impact of the positions for FY 2005-2006 is \$214,116, excluding any salary adjustments that may occur in that time frame.

There is no impact to our facilities from the addition of these positions as the Center was built to handle this additional staffing and equipment.

Special Instructions:

Please return one copy of the executed document plus a Minute Order to the department, attention: Commander Sam Gross, Information Services Division.

Concurrence:

Office of the County Administrator
Fire Department
Public Health Department